

Relocation ... A Matter of Good Planning



Alaska, being separated from the “lower 48” as we like to call it, can be accessed by 3 different ways. You can fly with major Alaskan city, usually Fairbanks or Anchorage. You can also drive the 1488 mile Alaskan Highway, or “Alcan”...a beautiful drive starting at Dawson Creek in British Columbia to Delta Junction, Alaska. Riding the Alaska Marine Highway via the ferry system is the third, and also beautiful alternative.

If you chose to drive, either leaving or coming, research beforehand will save time, money and many moments of frustration. Having a sponsor on the other end to assist you will provide support and needed information and make for a comfortable transition. The handiest item that you can use to assure a knowledgeable trip is the “MILEPOST”. A copy of the MILEPOST (publication that gives maps, areas of interest, history and locations of campsites, gas, lodging and food along the highways in Western Canada, Alaska and Washington) can be an invaluable resource to you in planning your trip. You can order a MILEPOST by calling 1-800-726-4707 or send email to books@alaskainfo.com. Most large bookstores also carry the Milepost or can order it for you. A good trip plan can make the difference between arriving on time and safely at your new duty station and having delays that could have been avoided.

Make sure your PCS orders state that you are authorized to travel the ALCAN or the ALCAN and marine highway if you are going to be using both. If you deviate from your travel plans, you need to have your orders amended to receive travel pay that will adequately cover your mode of travel. You may call 873-3042 (0700-1130 and 1200 to 1530, M-F) for more information on shipping of household goods, to include inbound, outbound, shipping POV, claims and ditty moves.

At the border you should have at least \$500.00 in cash, travel's checks or credit cards, plus \$75.00 for each adult passenger. Plan ahead for gas stops, lodging or camping and rest stops. There can be many miles between these but careful planning can greatly reduce the risk of being stranded. Be aware that roads may be rough due to frost heaves. There are areas where dirt roads and highway maintenance will slow your travel and the possibility of gravel hitting, chipping or breaking your windshield is high. Be prepared for most minor vehicle repairs such as flat tires, replacing belts or spark plugs. Emergency gear in your vehicle can help you to avoid dangerous situations if you break down. One big safety issue to be extremely aware of are large wild animals. Moose, elk, caribou, bison and sheep that tend to cross the road, linger on its' grassy sides and are



Weather in Canada and Alaska can change drastically in a very short time, even during the summer months. Make sure you have appropriate clothing and supplies.

Customs is now open 24 hours a day at many of the major entries, but you should call ahead to verify the hours for night time entry, especially if you are not on the main highways going into Canada. This will prevent you from spending hours at the border crossing waiting for them to re-open. There are custom restrictions at the Canadian border. Be aware of the restrictions on guns, ammunition, pets, and proof of insurance and personal identification before you reach the border. If your POV is still being financed or has a lien on it, you should check with the lien holder to get permission to take it out of the Lower 48 States/CONUS. For more information on customs regulations call or write to Revenue Canada, Customs and Excise, Communications Branch, Ottawa, ON K1A 0L5, or phone (604) 666-0545 and ask for the free travel brochure.



When you enter Canada, a customs officer may ask to see your passport and a valid visa, if one is necessary. As of summer 2009, a passport is required to travel in Canada. As of June 1, 2009, the US government will require most US citizens entering the US to have WHTI-compliant documents. Some of these affecting the military include: State Issued Enhanced Driver's License (when available), Enhanced Tribal Cards (when available), and U.S. Military Identification with Military Travel Orders.

If you are traveling with children, you should carry identification for each child. Divorced parents who share custody of their children should carry copies of the legal custody documents. Adults who are not parents or guardians should have written permission from the parents or guardians to supervise the children. When traveling with a group of vehicles, parents or guardians should travel in the same vehicle as the children when arriving at the border. Customs officers are looking for missing children and may ask questions about the children who are traveling with you.



Customs is now open 24 hours a day at many of the major entries, but you should call ahead to verify the hours for night time entry, especially if you are not on the main highways going into Canada. This will prevent you from spending hours at the border crossing waiting for them to re-open. There are custom restrictions at the Canadian border. Be aware of the restrictions on guns, ammunition, pets, and proof of insurance and personal identification before you reach the border. If your POV is still being financed or has a lien on it, you should check with the lien holder to get permission to take it out of the Lower 48 States/CONUS. For more information on customs regulations call or write to Revenue Canada, Customs and Excise, Communications Branch, Ottawa, ON K1A 0L5, or phone (604) 666-0545 and ask for the free travel brochure.



When you enter Canada, a customs officer may ask to see your passport and a valid visa, if one is necessary. If you are a citizen of the United States, you do not need a passport to enter Canada until summer 2009. However, you should carry proof of your citizenship, such as a birth certificate, certificate of citizenship or naturalization, as well as a photo ID. If you are a permanent resident of the U.S, you should bring your Permanent Resident Card (i.e., green card) with you. If you are traveling with children, you should carry identification for each child. Divorced parents who share custody of their children should carry copies of the legal custody documents.

Adults who are not parents or guardians should have written permission from the parents or guardians to supervise the children. When traveling with a group of vehicles, parents or guardians should travel in the same vehicle as the children when arriving at the border. Customs officers are looking for missing children and may ask questions about the children who are traveling with you.



Canada has strict gun control laws. Be sure that you are familiar with Canadian gun laws if you are planning to transport firearms. These are the summary of requirements if you are a gun user visiting Canada:

You cannot import a prohibited firearm or a prohibited device. You must be at least 18 and have a valid Canadian firearms license to import a restricted or non-restricted firearm.

An Authorization to Transport (ATT) is required for all restricted firearms.

All firearms must be registered. You must comply with the safe storage, display and transportation regulations.

The Canada Border Services Agency is responsible for declaration procedures. If you have been convicted of anything considered a criminal offence in Canada, including driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, you will need to get approval of rehabilitation or a temporary immigration permit from Canada's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration before you can enter Canada. You will be charged a fee of \$50 CAN for transporting firearms through Canada. Further information is available from the Canadian Firearms Control Center toll free at 1-800-731-4000, or visit their web site.



Canada requires that all drivers have a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and proof of registration. Canadian law requires that you carry at least \$200,000 third-party liability insurance. You will need to contact your insurance company and inform them that you are driving through a foreign country, i.e. Canada.

Speed limits in Canada are posted in kilometers. 100 km/h = 62.5 mph; 80 Km/h = 50 mph and 50 Km/h = 30 mph. Gas is sold in liters. Four liters equals a little over a gallon. It is approximately 2,350 miles between Great Falls, Montana and Fairbanks. If your vehicle averages 18 miles per gallon, it will take 130 gallons to drive this distance. Current prices for gasoline will average about \$5.00 to \$5.75 per gallon. At an average of \$5.50+ per gallon, it may cost you about \$715.00 just for gas. In addition, you will have lodging expenses. At 350 miles a day, it will take you 7 days to drive this distance.

Lodging costs vary, but at an average of \$75 per night for six nights, your cost will be \$450. This does not include food costs, which will vary with family size. Be aware that the cost of



If traveling by means of the Alaska Marine Highway System , you will enjoy one of the most beautiful ways to see Alaska! The ferries, operated by the State, carry vehicles, passengers and travel at a leisurely pace. Sailings are relatively infrequent, about once a month so it is vital that reservations should be made as far in advance as possible. To make reservations and find information, visit the AMHS web site at www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/explore/ or write to Alaska Marine Highway System Reservations, 6858 Glacier Hwy, Juneau, AK., 99801-7909. You can also call their toll-free number, 1-800-642-0066. Passenger travel, including a stateroom on the ferry, is at government expense. Your transportation office can issue you a Government Travel Request for passage or you can be reimbursed when you arrive at your new duty station. You can receive reimbursement of your POV being shipped on the ferry but the vehicle cannot exceed 800 cubic feet. Pets are permitted on board however there are restrictions. You must have a health certificate within 30 days of travel. There is a \$25 fee charged per animal. Animals must be cared for by their owners and must remain on the car deck, inside the car or in a kennel. Owners may visit pets only when the vessel is in port, as passengers are not permitted on the car deck once underway.



If flying and you need transportation to Fort Greely after you arrive at the Fairbanks International Airport, make arrangements with your sponsor in advance. Fort Greely is 100 miles away and a taxi is not feasible. There is a military lounge located in the baggage claim area of the airport compliments of the Armed services YMCA. You may utilize this lounge while you are waiting to be picked up by your sponsor. The ASYMCA can be reached at (907)353-5962

Fort Greely Relocation Office
(907)873-3284

